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WATER-COLOR EXHIBITIONS IN NEW YORK AND CHICAGO

The thirty-seventh annual exhibition of the American Water-Color Society, New York, affords ample evidence that workers in this medium are prone to be prolific rather than convincing in their output. Approximately three hundred and fifty pictures are hung, and it would have been a kindness to the visiting public—if not to the artists themselves—if the jury of acceptance had put its ban on fully half of the pictures admitted. A monotony of mediocre productions makes a dispiriting show; and one can scarcely regard the current exhibition in its entirety as one calculated to reflect honor, or even credit, on the society. True, there are some very admirable works displayed, but the select few can scarcely serve as a leaven for the indifferent or glaringly bad many. The adoption of a proper standard of excellence and the rigorous exclusion of everything lacking at least "passable quality" would make the society's shows more inviting and satisfying. The popular judgment—in which one is forced to concur—was well voiced by a reviewer at the time of the opening. Said he:



JESSAMINE
By W. G. Schneider

"It is rather stronger on the landscape side, a specialty to which water-color lends itself, and less satisfactory as to figure work and *genre*. As to portraiture, it can hardly be said to figure at all. These facts are indicated in the bestowal of the Evans prize of three hundred dollars upon Charles Mente for a very commonplace representation of an old milldam, a winter scene where cotton is made to

do duty for snow on the boulders of a half-frozen brook; and in which a fairly painted sky constitutes the chief redeeming feature. To any one who remembers the pictures that took the Evans prize in the last half-dozen years or so—Irving Wiles's 'The Green Cushion,' the late Harvey Eaton's 'Brook,' Edward H. Potthast's 'Reverie,' Arthur I. Keller's 'Finishing Touches,' or Colin C. Cooper's 'Broad Street Skyscrapers,' of the last exhibition—the



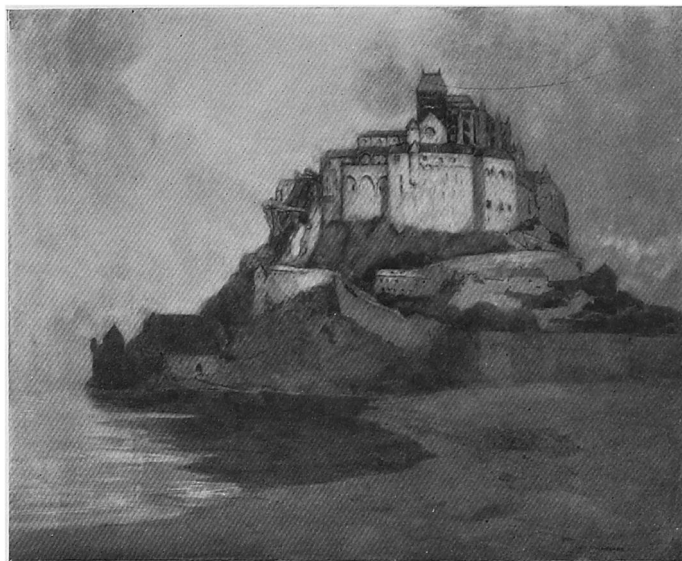
MOONRISE
By Arthur Parton

present award must come as a disappointment. The ways of prize-giving juries are inscrutable, and not often more so than in this instance, for there are a dozen or more landscapes, not to mention figure pieces, that to an outsider seem more worthy of distinction."

Possibly Mr. Mente owes his prize to the fact that it cannot be given twice to the same man. Otherwise it would likely have gone to one of the prize-winners of former years. Mr. Keller's "The Challenge," for instance, which depicts four men in the garb of a bygone day discussing a letter, their poses natural, and their faces strongly expressive, is one of the very best pieces in the show, and Mr. Cooper's "Basilica Square, Quebec," "Flatiron Building," and

"Madison Square on a Windy Day," both in drawing and in color are fully up to the level of all his former prize-winning attainments.

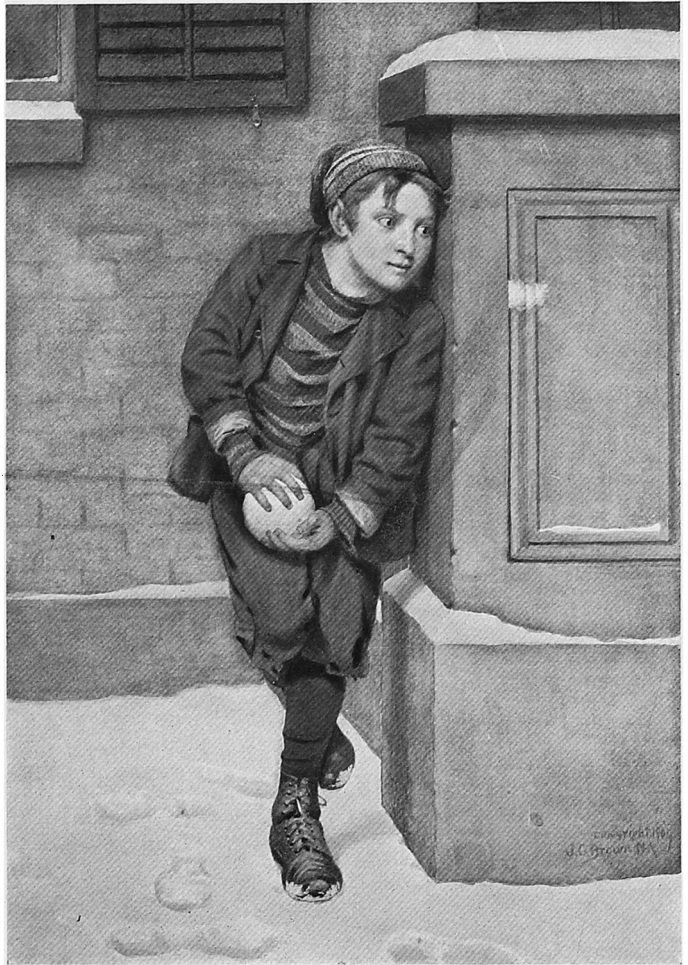
To dwell at length on the three hundred odd pictures of the exhibition would be a waste of time and space, and since a local reviewer has singled out with fair discrimination the best pictures in the show, I need make no apology for deferring to his judgment and even quoting his words. Among the landscapes worthy of com-



THE STRONGHOLD
By William J. Whittemore

mendation, he says, Charles Warren Eaton has a number that are none the worse because they recall so many good pictures of his in the past. He has the secret of making a sky luminous, thanks to subtle gradations of tone; his representations of forest clearings, with perhaps a clump of dark trees, a foreground of dead moorland, and a soft, tender light over the whole, are full of poetry. Sometimes he verges upon the sentimental prettiness that is fatal, and he repeats the same devices rather often; but for such sketches as the "Edge of the Pine Woods," "Winter," and "Woods at Evening," his favorite view of tree trunks aligned against a glow of twilight, there can be only words of congratulation. In similar vein and equally happy is Frank R. Green's "Silent Hour," a lovely stretch of sandy dunes, with one or two stunted pines and the moon just

above the horizon. A "Rainy Afternoon in Oxford," by George E. Burr, gives a good idea of persistent downpour, and is superior in



MAKING A SOAKER

By J. G. Brown

handling to the same artist's "North Wales Valley," in which the baleful influence of Monet's meaningless green and pink stippling is

felt. Thomas B. Craig has a pleasant, unaffected "Midsummer," and William R. Derrick some good pictures of sheep, handled more or less after Mauve's fashion, the figures only passable, but the general tone more than fair.

One of the best landscapes in the galleries, perhaps the best, is Charles P. Gruppe's "Hour of Rest," which recalls the many strong pictures, in the best style of Dutch landscape work, sent over here by this artist. A Corot-like atmosphere, dark clumps of foliage, a bit of water reflecting a stretch of misty sky—not a note of strong



THE PROWLER
By W. H. Drake

color in the canvas, and yet the effect more brilliant than any chromatic fantasia on the same walls. Childe Hassam does some curiously bad work with "After Rain in the Connecticut Hills," giving us trees that would do no credit to a Noah's Ark, but makes up for it by a clever and spirited sketch of a rainy night on Broadway. Another contributor who sends pictures decidedly good and bad this year is Mr. Potthast, whose "Husking Corn" is a graceless affair, but whose "Clearing Up," while rough and blotchy, is a most effective bit, and well worth exhibition. Edward Gay, J. C. Nicoll, Arthur Parton, Charles Melville Dewey, and Mr. Moser may always be depended upon for interesting work, and do not fail the society this year.

A "November Twilight"—some sheep under a twilight sky of much refinement—is by Arthur Feudel, and William N. Hasler sends a small but effective "Evening." "October Meadows," of W. C.

Fitler, while too suggestive of pastel, has merit, and William Ritschel's "Road to the Beach," a view of the moors upon a gray, lowering day, is one of the really satisfactory pictures shown. A small "Dairy Court," by Howell Wilson, of Philadelphia, is a good echo, so to speak, of Dutch work. Hopkinson Smith's "Breathless Lagoon" is a replica of the Venetian scene he has done so often and so well. Mr. Bricher, Mr. Rehn, and W. T. Richards of course



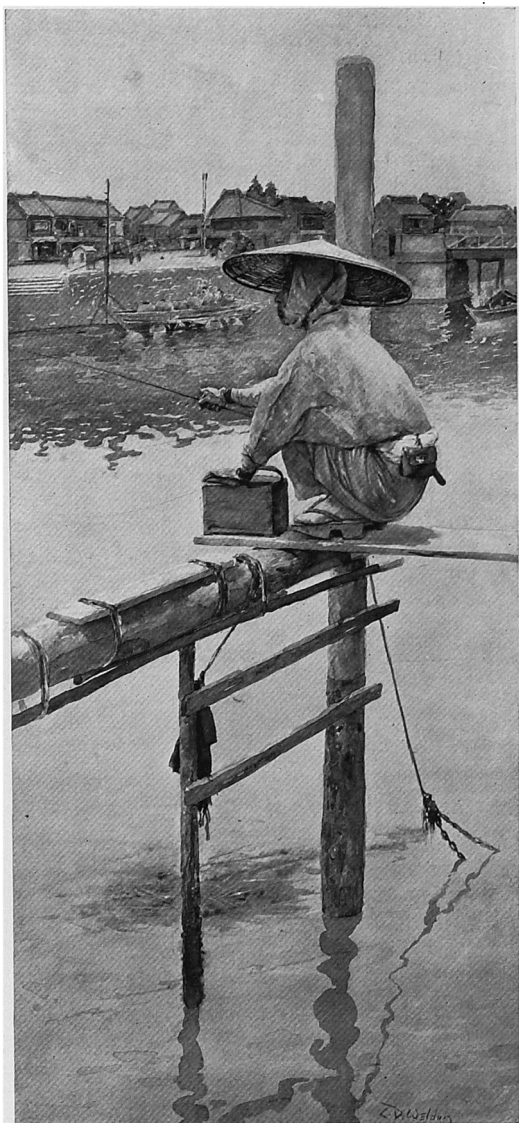
AFTER THE BATTLE
By Carlton T. Chapman

have surf or sea sketches, and Mr. Chapman gives us a glimpse of the pretentious old hulks that sailed the seas several generations ago.

One of the largest figure pieces is the "Lullaby" of Francis Day, a life-size picture of mother and child fairly drawn, but lacking in any note of originality, a criticism to which most of the *genre* and figure work shown this year is open. William A. McCullough's "Bookworm" is a chubby student of four years, intent upon her book. Rather depressing is Luis H. Mora's "Cotillon Favors"—three sad-faced young women who look as if engaged in preparations for a funeral rather than a ball. A "Paolo and Francesca" by John H. Fry has some graceful figure drawing. Gordon H. Grant's "Disturber of the Peace" and Granville Smith's "Wedding Journey" are both good as illustration material. Leon Moran shows a

number of bits in his usual miniature style of handling. Some nice pieces of still life—old books and bric-à-brac—are by C. R. Hirst. E. J. Steichen has a portrait of a young man that is worthy of mention, and a graceful girl in a kimono. J. CARR.

The current exhibition of water-colors and pastels at the Art Institute, Chicago, is no better and perhaps no worse than the shows given in former years. There is the same witness of whims and oddities and of weakness and immaturity; and it should be chronicled, a fair quota of good, strong, legitimate work. The contributions of the Chicago artists are supplemented by a hundred or more well-selected examples of work sent from Philadelphia, and much of the interest of the show centers in these Eastern pictures. Among those of whom a kind if not always an enthusi-



A FISHERMAN
By C. D. Weldon

astic word may be said are Jane Bridgman Chase, Elizabeth Shippen Green, Violet Oakley, Jessie Wilcox Smith, Everett Shinn, Margaret Jordan Patterson, Sargent Kendell, Childe Hassam, Florence Robinson, Eleanor Colburn, G. H. Clements, M. A. Bell, Harold H. Betts, Dwight Blaney, W. E. Emerson, Charles Morris Young, Susan H. Bradley, Hugh Breckenridge, Walter Douglas, Henry W. Tomlinson, Charles Warren Eaton, Alice B. Thayer, Sarah C. Sears, Dodge McKnight, Henning Ryden, and Henry B. Snell.

Apropos of this exhibition, J. W. Pattison, the well-known art-writer, made a remark which is worth quoting as indicative of two prevailing faults, ambition to seem clever and carelessness in the matter of details, which characterize too many workers in the lighter medium, singling Wenzell out for his shaft. "It is painful to see how careless popular artists become, doing astonishing feats of wanton cleverness without heart or soul in them. Wenzell has made so many sprightly illustrations and cover designs, which were reproduced in colors, that he cares for nothing but this superior facility. Two important pastels here are as spirited in handling as they are empty in sentiment, though intended for sentimentalism. In one of them, a maiden, in long white garment, green and gold girdle and loose robe of the same colors, leans against a doorway, hiding her face with one hand while a knight in black armor kisses the other. The youth's brown horse makes a spot of contrast to the delightful green and gold colors. It is all well, but only superior smartness. In the other an angel hands a naked babe to a young woman—in the same clothes—she receiving it with a coolness only equaled by the embarrassment of the baby, perhaps conscious of his nakedness—poor thing!—and not very well acquainted with his new mother. Funniest of all is the fact that he has used the same model for the two, angel and mother being one person. This model should be pretty old by this time, and not be sure whether she is a lady or a circus girl, or any other indifferent character, so long has she served as all manner of personages."

M. EVARTS.





THE APPRENTICE
By William H. Lippincott

